2:Skinner E-5 (1917) 1920
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Bribri

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BRIBRI DWELLING WITHOUT SIDES
A bowlder used as a metate is shown in the foreground

[facing p. 47]

342 824 used to level off the roof and to make an even finish. The third grass is thin and fine, and is called *zacate de palito*, in Spanish ("little stick grass") or *su* in Boruca. This is supposed to protect against and to stop cracks.

The Indians pull up these grasses, roots and all, and gather them in bundles which they tie with a vine or pieces of the grass itself. 342 They put these rolls on an ox or on their own [492 backs and take them to the building site (see 493] fig. 7, *a*). As many as twenty-seven hundred rolls or bundles of grass are needed for an average roof. If the grass gets wet, each roll is opened and laid in the sun to dry. When ready to use, the grass is placed between one or two of the narrower horizontal poles of the roof forming a neat row. It is not tied, but is literally wedged-in. A roof usually has from six to nine horizontal rows of grass.

The interior of the houses varies. Some have two partitions made of *caña blanca* (see p. 8) or even of thin *palo de mayo* poles, following the same construction as the outer walls, at times, even with a smattering of *bajareque*. When a house is so divided, one room is used for the kitchen, one for a sleeping room, and one for a living room. Occasionally, a little hallway results in this type of house. However, the hallway is only the result of the partitions and is not an architectural feature. The average house, however, has only one partition, usually of canes, which sets off the kitchen.

354 **Household Furniture.** Many of the *Boruca* have, in addition to the three hearth stones (see p. 8), a *fogón*, or stove, built in the typical *ladino* fashion. This *fogón* is a raised wooden container, rectangular in shape, and supported by four wooden legs.

The container is filled with mud mixed with pebbles or small pieces of stone and left to dry. When thoroughly dry, three or more stones are placed on top to support the cooking vessels. Sticks of wood are placed between these stones and set on fire for cooking. At times small rounded mud ovens are also made on the *fogón*.

352 The *tabanco*, or wooden platform, is an important feature of a Boruca house. The *tabancos* are usually made of the stilt or black palms called in Spanish *chonta*, or *chonta negra*. There are two kinds of *chonta*. Both have

291 quality as a man's belt. Occasionally, as late as a few years ago, this same *huipil* was used with a piece of cloth attached to the back as a collar. The skirt, which is relatively heavy, is worn wrapped around the body, the stripes placed horizontally (see fig. 7, *d*). It is sustained by a string tied around the waist. Under the skirt, loin cloths of *mastate* (see p. 18) are sometimes worn. No other sort of undergarment is used.

301 Today, most women wear two necklaces, usually of beads with seeds or coins interspersed. Earrings of seeds, a round red seed from the *poró* tree, or a similar seed that has a black spot and grows on a vine, are favorites, but cheap earrings from *ladino* stores are also seen. Before, however, in addition to seeds and fruits, sea shells and even pearls were used. Pink sea shells, such as the *Guaymi* wear today, were particularly coveted. Animal pelts and bird's egg shells served as necklaces. Rings were and are made from the seeds of the coyol palm and a palm called *palmilera*. The women love combs and flowers in their
[439] hair, seldom appearing with less than two combs and, as a rule, three or four, all of bright colors and bought from the Chinamen on the coast or in Buenos Aires. Barrettes also are frequently placed between the combs and the flowers. The hair is always arranged in two
302 braids and parted in the center. Often ribbon is braided in these plaits. Until recently, instead of ribbons in the braids, cotton thread dyed purple was used. It is said that no other color answered the purpose. The two braids were tied with this thread on top of the hair in the front. Today, the older women gen-

[continued p. 14-B, first paragraph]

## *TRANSPORTATION*

481 By Land. The *Boruca*, as is true of all the Indians of Costa Rica, are great walkers, climbing up and down the sharp spurs and steep mountains of their native habitat. Their main community, as we have seen, is situated in a series of undulating hills, which in itself
● 482 is not easy country for a horse or a mule. The ox is what one might rightly call the only beast of burden common to these people. A number of families own an ox which is used

[continued p. 14-B, fourth paragraph]

*Lehmann, 1910, vol. I, p. 198.

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949
SA19 Talamanca SA19
Boruca

erally put the braids up, tying them together with ribbons. The hair is kept sleek with cocoa-butter, and the skin is cleared of freckles or blemishes by using a mixture of cocoa-butter (see p. 20) and *tʃama*. T*ʃama* is sometimes called by the Spanish name *yuquilla* (*Curcuma longa* L.).

The men wear the regulation pants and shirt of the *ladino* and some still use the woven belt. In the beginning of this century, the men wore a typical costume, the cloth for which was woven by the men. Lehmann[25] notes that this was characteristic of the *Cotos*, whom, as we have seen, form part of the modern *Boruca*. Weaving was done by some, not all, of the men and women. In particular the older *Coto* men wove for all the other men.[26] The men used a *huipil* without sleeves which took one month to weave and reached below the knees. The stripes were narrower than those of a women's skirt, and they were more like the belts used at present by the men. Beneath this, they wore a loin cloth of *mastate*, and a woven belt which kept the loin-cloth in place. Formerly, the men cut off all their hair except a small portion in the front which stood up like unruly bangs. One old man in 1944 used the same sort of decorations which were used years ago, pelts of birds, squirrel tails, and bird egg shells as necklaces.

Most Indians go barefooted, although occasionally sandals are seen. These sandals are of hide, usually of wild peccary, with thongs of twisted hide which pass between the first and second toe and between the third and fourth toe, being fastened on the outer side by the ankle.

## *TRANSPORTATION*

to transport essentials on his back (see fig. 7, *a*), and never to pull a cart as amongst the *ladinos*. The very few horses of the *Boruca* (see p. 23) are ridden with a halter, and old, worn, second-hand saddles.

**By Water.** In addition to a mountainous land, the terrain of the *Boruca* and most of their communities border on water. The Diquis River still forms an important highway for these people. Until a few years ago, the

[25] Vázquez de Coronado, 1908, p. 50.

[p. 14-B]

3:Stone E-5 (1945) 1949

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Boruca



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4. Old and Indian woman laden with grasses for a roof. A. Artifacts of the Bribri: 1, mono or shirt; 2, hake; 3, doll; 4, maraca or rattles; 5, mask; 6, fan-tipped arrow; 7, man's belt; 8, sieve. B. Artifacts of the Bribri: 1, four-legged stool with head and tail; 2, basket; 3, sieve; 4, bark cloth; 5, drum. C. Woman wearing the mono, or shirt, and blouse.

[p.57]

231 better-suited for raising fowl, but is domesticated in Talamanca, where its principal diet consists of roaches. Ducks also are not common, and there is no native word for them nor for turkey. When found, they are kept inside the large house in a small compartment.

[234] Cattle are owned by only a few on the Coen
[262] River and lower Talamanca. On both sides of
[954] the range they are kept more as a bank account than for food. Milk is not used. In Ujarrás, Salitre, and Cabagra oxen are used for riding
● [492] or carrying burdens on their backs (fig. 2, *d*).½ In Ujarrás, wild cattle, most of which belong
794 to the church or, better said, to St. Vincent,
231 the patron of the community, roam the
422 savannas. This is a vestige of the ancient tithe and the animals are used only when the priest pays his yearly visit. On this occasion, the required number of steers for a communal
[411] feast are shot with bow and arrow. The cattle in Ujarrás that do not belong to the church are the property of three inhabitants who sell them when necessity demands. Chickens,
231 swine, and steers are eaten on special occasions
[262] such as "juntas" (*see* Reunions) and death feasts (*see* Death and Burial).

There are no horses in Chirripó or upper Talamanca, and only one or two in the Sixaola Valley. In 1956, there were two horses at Salitre, one at Cabagra, two at Ujarrás, and two at China Kichá.

262 **Wild Foods.** The diet of the Bribri and the Cabécares is supplemented by many noncultivated foods. In the list below, we cite only those which we were able to have identified by their Latin names.[71]

262 The fruit of *Renealmia exaltata* (Aubl.)
137 Griseb is generally fried in lard. The red flower of *Erythrina costaricensis* Micheli, the
252 leaves and the tender part of the vine *Cyclanthera Naudiniana* Cogn., the sprouts of the female palm *Chamaedorea* sp., the leaves and tender shoots of *Phytolacca rivinoides* Kunth & Bouche, and a juvenile fern are boiled. The grainlike fruit of *Urera baccifera* (L.) Gaud is used as a substitute for rice. The wild papaya

parres Plátanos y yucas. . . ." There is no mention of maize at all.

[70] Stone, 1956.

[128] [71] Dr. Paul J. Shanks helped to gather and to classify these foods.

½ [see category 11h - End Plate 1 - Analyst]

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Bribri
Cabecar

492 184 Very seldom on the Caribbean, but frequently on the Pacific side, horses and oxen are used for transportation (*see* Domestic Animals; fig. 2, *d*).

501 [133] **By Water.** The rivers in Bribri and Cabécar territory on the Pacific side do not lend themselves to water transportation. It is interesting to note that here the usual word for a boat, in both tongues, is a corruption of the Spanish *canoa: kanó* in Bribri; *konọ* in Cabécar. The [192] Bribri of the Caribbean littoral, however, use besides the term just given, the word *ru*.[86]

Both Gabb and Skinner call attention to the lack of water craft among the Bribri,[87] but Pittier mentions cedar and ceiba canoes, some equipped with a sail and rudder for the sea.[88] This last type is not seen today, but dugouts are fairly common in the Sixaola River, men and women paddling or poling when necessary (*see* Canoes). Balsa logs are tied together with vines making rafts and are used to cross rivers in parts of upper Talamanca. The Cabécares are not seamen in any sense, and only those married to Bribri in the Sixaola Plain are known to manage dugouts.

482 **Carrying Devices.** The tumpline (*see* Fibers) is used by men around the shoulders or chest. By women, it is worn around the head for heavy burdens. Babies are carried by women [864] who tie them in a tumpline around the shoulders or in a piece of *mastate* around the waist (Fig. 9, *d*).

[Text continues top of P. 21(B)--Analyst]

## MANUFACTURES

283 [824] 248 [794] **Fibers.** There are many fiber plants used for cordage by these peoples. White cotton, one or two bushes of which are found near every household, is mainly ceremonial in use, being fashioned into string for tying death bundles (*see* Funeral and Bone Burial). The women make this by rolling the deseeded fibers with the palm of their hands over their thighs. The result is an uneven lumpy string but one that they consider as very essential to prevent bad [777] luck and to protect the dead. For use in sewing clothes, some women also make cotton thread [294] on spindle whorls. Occasionally, small carrying nets are manufactured from it.

[Text continues bottom of P. 21(B)--Analyst]

[86] *ru* is also the Boruca word for any water craft.
[87] Gabb, 1875, p. 523; Skinner, 1920, p. 86.

6: Stone E-5 (1956-1959) 1962

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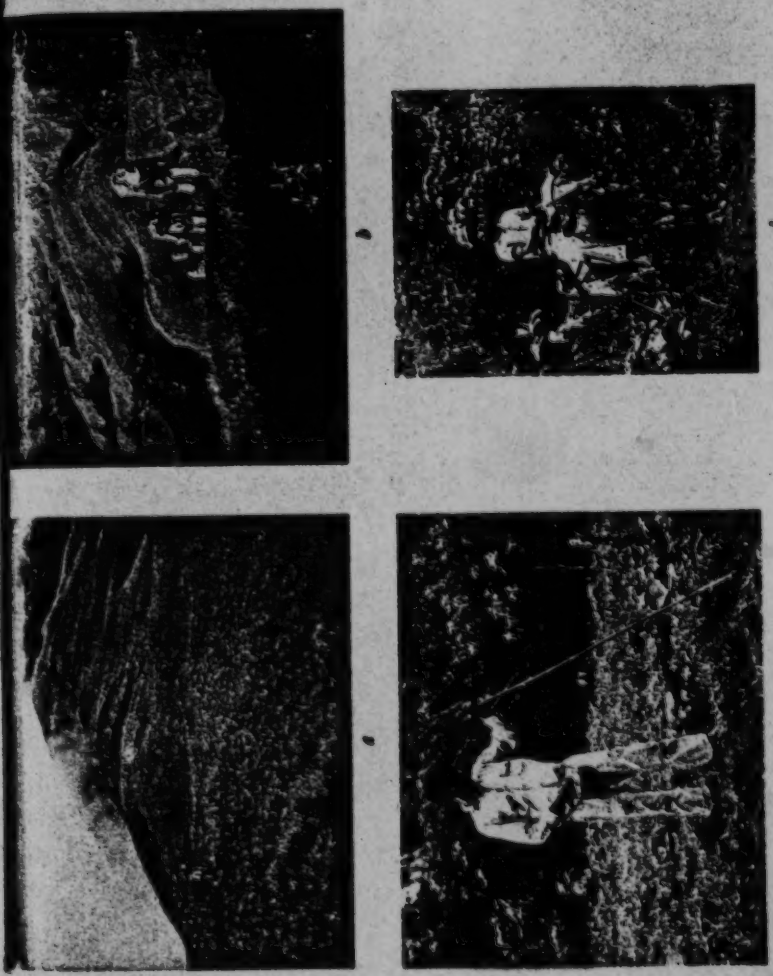

a–d, Swimming by Ujarrás, Pacific slope. e, Planting in Ujarrás, Pacific slope. d, Bribri riding an ox, Pacific slope.

[END Plate 1]